

June 20, 1964

Dear Marvin Malone:

Thank you for sending me two copies (editions) of your magazine for the price of one. You say you did it because of my sincerity and straight-forwardness, or similar wordage. I am glad you classify the qualities as positive.

I have read your magazines and as strange as it may seem, they are just about as I thought they would be. I will again be sincere and forth-right. I thought you were giving the "public" a sort of "cover-up frontage" by emphasizing "Excellence" as the common denominator of your requirements for publication. I don't believe there is anything for us to gain by discussing that point, as I think we will both agree that "Excellence" figures very little as it is hard for me to correlate "frigging, whoredom, etc." as subject matter, abject as they are, with excellence in the expression of (should we magnify the verbiage as) thought. I think the best that could be said for your authors is that they show some Imagism. Imagery would be based upon what is uppermost in the mind of that person of course.

No, I am not a Preacher — I am a professional man; also an Ex-service man of about 2 yrs. in U.S. Navy; so the lurid imagery is not entirely foreign to me, though I say the use of English is very poor on average. I made notes on the poems as I read them but when I got over to Charles Bukowski's "HOURS" and Parm Mayer's "Ground Work for Reconciliation," and Ottone M. Riccio's "Sunlight and Raindrops on Leaves & TV Antennas," I quit the notes, as it was then clear what you purpose to major on in your publication. Let me just put it plainly, "I really fee (sic) sorry for you." You are evidently striving for "something" which you have not found. In my Navy experiences, you can guess that I saw much of the slums and red-light places, including Barbarea Coast in San Francisco, Cal. at its worst. They make a real man's passion burn, and I am wondering if your lurid authors may be like a story I once read (and have about forgotten) where the protagonist was sexually deficient — the soft boring augur would not get hard. He called in a man friend to do his work with his wife as he looked on, whinnying like a Stud-horse as the other man did the job. That was his only means of sexual satisfaction.

Of course, any man that is not deformed sexually, gets "a rise" out of reading such things. BUT, my would-be friend, when one's mind hangs onto those things as a principal interest in life, he becomes something besides a man; a whore-pimp, homo-sexual or some Sadistic kind of person. If the promotion of that way of life is "excellence," God help us.

I am married, have a fairly beautiful wife who takes care of my sexual needs in a clean manner, and respectable. I have four beautiful daughters who are respectable. Imagine my majoring on the things which you publish, as a guide in life for them. What would our Social Structure in America be within a few years if everybody did? It is much better to have your own wife, home and family, and good friends, than to be an Outcast thrown in with the whores, etc. to eke out a passion-soaked existence of drunkenness, debauchery and slothfulness. Practically all of your "things called poems" are directed to that sort of subject matter. I see some names listed in your publication which surprise me, also.

I do not say all of this to be wholly critical; but to encourage you to a better view-point of life. There is bound to be a Divine Creator of things; too much of super-human shows up in animal instincts, and also human instinct which must come from a higher source than the human. Things don't "just come into existence" of their own. When one recognizes something of the Divine in creation, his eye-sight turns "up and out" and the bellies of whores become less important. Some contemporary poets have written articles arguing that our Govt. should now appoint more poets to places of importance in governmental affairs, as poets "are people with vision and understanding." Are your authors qualified?

Why am I taking time to write all this anyway? I am very busy and perhaps wasting time. I write a lot regarding titles to property, etc. and a large number of people are waiting for me to do the writing for them. Shame on me for disappointing them. Here we bore a great deal, into the womb of nature to gain the deposits of oil and gas — valuable prizes; your men evidently do their "boring" to make deposits in wombs. Which is the more excellent?

Thanks very much for refusing my submissions. You were smart and knew they did not belong in your publication. I will keep trying on my messages of optimism and beauty, etc. even though they may not strike the chords that attract many

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listening ears.

Sincerely yours,

Harry A. H ———— , President: N ———— Abstract Company

N ————, Oklahoma

P.S. I take the blame for our conflict of views, as I should have known from the name of your Magazine that it was fraught with the bitter and unpleasant taste — as wormwood. Yeah, I know the original meaning of wormwood was different but current meaning is about as I said. Also I should have first ordered sample copies rather than submit blindly. Your listing in WRITERS MARKET and in Writers' Digest fooled me. HAH

(an accurate transcript)

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Dear Harry A. H ————:

Good poetry is a group of words totally occupied by any man.

Bad poetry is the result of any man totally occupied by words.

Thank you for your poeter (poem-letter).

Marvin Malone

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Comments on the above exchange are invited by the editor -- they may be pro or con in regard to either letter

////////// WORMWOOD BROADSIDE: 5 //////////////////////////////////////

400 copies